THE NEW-CHURCH REVIEW

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THE NEW-CHURCH REVIEW

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THE
NEW-CHURCH REVIEW

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REAL CHRISTIANITY

BY THE REV. LEWIS FIELD HITE

TO earnest and ardent souls, it is a deeply disturbing fact that so few Christians are really and truly Christian.

The observation is constantly made that Christians seem no better than other people. Christian principles and doctrines are well known, commonly recognized as standards of judgment and of conduct; but people rarely take these standards seriously. Impulse, fancy, the interests of the moment, personal likes and dislikes, practical affairs, absorb and distract professing Christians as well as others, to such an extent that a consistently purposeful and rational life is more or less abhorrent, and religious life is so remote from every day consciousness and effort that it seems foreign to the ordinary mind. Life in the world and for the world is taken to be the only real and desirable life for every day people. But as a matter of fact such a life grows wearisome and empty: it lacks the satisfactions that are deep and abiding. The play of fancy, of sentiment, and of ideals urges us to seek a higher and more harmonious life, free from toil, compulsion, and defeat. In the world, we do not find a life of unmixed enjoyment, fulfilment, and peace, except in imagination and aspiration; we get a foretaste of it only in congenial employment.

Plato set before the mind of mankind the eternal contrast between the mortal sense-world of change and appearances on the one hand, and the immortal ideal world, absolutely real, on the other; a world of final and complete fulfilment, where the true, the beautiful, and the good are timelessly united. Christianity appropriated this contrast in the form of the realm of nature and the realm of spirit; this world of bodies, and their appearances and behavior, was given the character of the seminary of heaven. The Lord Jesus Christ lived and taught a life in this world which would prepare for heaven; and He did yet more, He promised His disciples that His Spirit would abide with them and all men unto everlasting life. This promise was fulfilled in the origin and growth of the Christian Church. But men were slow to understand the meaning of His Spirit, and to accept the power and direction of His presence and operation in their souls.

As the Church grew, as its membership increased, all the perversities of unregenerate human nature asserted themselves, and men began to quarrel and fight over differences of opinion and the clash of aims and methods. Life in the world of enlarged political, social, and industrial opportunities and obligations became immensely complicated with worldly and personal interests. People entered the Church from various motives, and lived from various motives in the Church; so that it was hard to distinguish in practical life Christians from non-Christians. Habits of formal and conventional Christianity became prevalent and were made a cloak for a worldly and sinful life. Under these conditions, the Lord's Spirit found increasing difficulty in entering and directing the lives of Christians; and Christians found it increasingly difficult to live in accordance with Christian principles and standards. The services of the Church, private Bible reading, a common knowledge of Christian principles and doctrine, preserved a Christian atmosphere of enlightenment and restraint; but the intellectual, emotional, and practical life of men persisted in the

ways of the world and of personal self-seeking. The sense of the Lord's life-giving presence was obscured by these conditions, and extraordinary efforts were called for to counteract them and to give effect to Christian motives and efforts. Accordingly, all down through the Christian centuries men of religious enthusiasm and force have come forward, whose souls were fired with the experience of the Lord's saving power, and with the Lord's love of saving the blind, the wicked, and the sinful. These men had experienced the miracle of the Lord's transforming presence and operation. With marvelous energy and newly inspired zeal they aroused their hearers to a real sense of true Christian life. Under the impulse of great leaders, such efforts resulted occasionally in fresh religious movements, marked periods of religious revival. In modern times, the Wesleyan movement was an intense and far-reaching religious revival. The essence of this movement was a moving conviction of the Lord's immediate presence in the miracle of "conversion"—the experience of the joy of being saved from sin, and of the new freedom, the new motives, and the new religious energy, that come with it.

The evangelistic movement in origin and progress was based essentially upon this experience. Like previous movements of religious revival, the evangelistic spirit and method spread and became the popular type of Christianity. But inevitably and commonly the vividness of this experience wore off, leaving people much as before, and the result in extreme cases was called back-sliding. Apart from back-sliding, the converts ordinarily fell back into their old habits of thought and life. In spite of the efforts of the revivalists and the Churches, the great mass of church-goers remained indifferent to religion and absorbed in worldly and selfish pursuits. Christian leaders and teachers were distressed and alarmed at the lack of response to the accustomed methods of appeal. The doctrine of vicarious atonement lost its efficacy. The doctrine of salvation sounded empty when the sense of sin was absent and the doctrine of sin was gen-

erally repudiated. Resort was taken to other methods of appeal, partly humanistic or humanitarian, and partly rationalistic. But such appeals led people away from religion rather than to it, so that Christian teaching and preaching were forced to the natural and proper alternative of attempting to lead people *directly* to Christ for salvation and fulness of life. Christianity from the beginning has professed to worship Christ as in some way a manifestation of God, and this has been the characteristic and saving element in the Christian religion. The evangelistic movement has centered its effort in recalling men to this worship, and has sought to lead men to an actual experience of the Lord's saving power and of His life-giving presence. The joy, freedom, strength, and peace realized in this experience secured a living response to this appeal. As the experience was ascribed to the presence and power of the Lord's Spirit, it together with the enlightening and strengthening use of the Gospel story helped men look directly to the Lord in worship and in life. In view of the strengthened naturalism and rationalism of the more recent intellectual and moral conditions, this effort is known as the "Back to Christ Movement," and has been the most effective of the traditional Christian appeals. Books, sermons, and addresses have been devoted to this theme, and have been widely influential. Some of the most widely read books of this kind have been those of the Rev. E. Stanley Jones, the wonderfully successful missionary in India. His book "The Christ of the Indian Road" may be taken as a typical expression of the Back-to-Christ movement.

There are two constantly recurring themes which are the burden of this book: one is that Christians are not Christian, not Christian in real truth and life; the other is that real Christianity is found in the conscious and vivid experience of the Lord's saving and life-giving presence. Both of these themes have been the burden of Christian comment and of Christian exhortation all down through the Christian centuries. The directness and the concreteness with which the

author impresses his conviction give the book its interest and its distinction. There is another feature which is persistent and which provokes criticism; and that is, the forced contrast which pervades the book between "Christians" and those who continue in the "experience of Christ." With this goes the contrast between talking about Christ and looking directly to Him for help; in its modernistic and reactionary form, it is the contrast between doctrine and life. No doubt there is ground for this contrast; but when pushed too far, it conflicts with the principle that, at least on the rational level, knowledge and life go together. Knowledge is *per se* the function of life; neither exists without the other. Certainly, knowledge with teaching about Christ is the only way of leading men consciously into His presence. To put the principle in another form, for well developed manhood there is no life without doctrine, and no doctrine but what is about life. What the author is really contrasting here is not Christianity and Christ, but Christianity and the abortive lives of the great mass of Christians; in short, genuine Christianity and Christians as they commonly are. He often uses the term "Christianity" when he means Christendom; that is, the field of Christian civilization, and especially the vices and wickedness of western civilization. This is the critical and negative theme of the book.

The setting of the story is the author's contact with all classes in India, most intimately with the higher castes, in his missionary work. His work illustrates and emphasizes the change that has come over the attitude of missionaries towards the heathen nations. Loss of faith in the doctrine of vicarious atonement and original sin forced the choice of a different approach. A comparison of the various kinds and degrees of civilization brought to light excellences and defects in all, Christian civilization among them. This led to a better understanding of other civilizations and to more sympathy with them, and suggested to the missionary an approach through mutual sympathy and knowledge. So that missionary effort was more and more directed to pre-

senting Christianity as a doctrine of greater freedom and fulness of life. The author emphasizes and develops this approach. In fact, he urges and argues the abandonment of the doctrinal approach altogether, and professes to concentrate upon the direct and simple presentation of Christ. Much of the book is taken up with exhibiting the success of this effort; and his success was without doubt remarkable. He spoke regularly to large and sympathetic audiences; he had many intimate private conferences with the highest officials and the leading men of the communities where he had his meetings. Very often these officials and leaders presided at the meetings and participated in the discussions. According to the account, the appeal for the direct and simple acceptance of Christ was uniformly successful. He found common readiness to accept Christ, if dissociated from the Christian religion, which meant for them the temper and habits of western civilization.

The real heart of the book is the experience which he describes in brief as follows:

> After over eight years continuously in India in various types of missionary work, ranging from pastor of an English church, head of a publishing house, missionary to the villages, district superintendent of large areas, I felt strangely drawn to work among the educated high castes, . . . nearly all our work was among the lower castes.
>
> Along with my regular work I had started a Bible class and study group at an Indian club house where leading Hindus and Mohammedans gathered. After tennis in the evenings we would sit together until darkness fell and study the New Testament and discuss spiritual matters. One day one of the leading government officials, a Hindu, remarked, "How long has this mission been in this city?" I told him about fifty years. He asked me very pointedly: "Then why have you gone only to the lower castes? Why haven't you come to us?" I replied that I supposed it was because we thought they did not want us. He replied: "It is a mistake. We want you if you will come the right way." We want you if you will come the right way! Almost every moment since then I have been in eager quest for that right way. I have come to the conclusion that the right way was just to be a Christian with all the fearless implications of that term.

But who was sufficient for these things? For it meant standing down amid the currents of thought and national movements sweeping over India and interpreting Christ to the situation. I was painfully conscious that I was not intellectually prepared for it. I was the more painfully conscious that I was not Christian enough to do what the situation demanded. And most depressing of all, I was physically broken.

The eight years of strain had brought on a nervous exhaustion and brain fatigue so that there were several collapses in India before I left for furlough. On board ship while speaking in a Sunday morning service there was another collapse. I took a year's furlough in America. On my way back to India I was holding evangelistic meetings among the university students of the Philippine Island at Manila. Several hundreds of these Roman Catholic students professed conversion. But in the midst of the strain of the meetings my old trouble came back. There were several collapses. I went on to India with a deepening cloud upon me. Here I was beginning a new term of service in this trying climate and beginning it—broken. I went straight to the hills upon my arrival and took a complete rest for several months. I came down to the plains to try out and found that I was just as badly off as ever. I went to the hills again. When I came down the second time I saw that I could go no further, I was at the end of my resources, my health was shattered. Here I was facing this call and task and yet utterly unprepared for it in every possible way.

I saw that unless I got help from somewhere I would have to give up my missionary career, go back to America and go to work on a farm to try to regain my health. It was one of my darkest hours. At that time I was in a meeting at Lucknow. While in prayer, not particularly thinking about myself, a Voice seemed to say, "Are you yourself ready for this work to which I have called you?" I replied: "No, Lord, I am done for. I have reached the end of my resources." The Voice replied, "If you will turn that over to me and not worry about it, I will take care of it." I quickly answered, "Lord, I close the bargain right here." A great peace settled into my heart and pervaded me. I knew it was done! Life—abundant life—had taken possession of me. I was so lifted up that I scarcely touched the road as I walked quietly home that night. Every inch was holy ground. For days after that I hardly knew I had a body. I went through the days, working all day and far into the night, and came down to bedtime wondering why in the world I should ever go to bed at all, for there was not the slightest trace of tiredness of any kind. I seemed possessed by Life and Peace and Rest—by Christ himself. . . . Nine of the most strenuous years

of my life have gone by since then, and the old trouble has never returned, and I have never had such health. But it was more than a physical touch. I seemed to have tapped new Life for body, mind, and spirit. Life was on a permanently higher level. And I had done nothing but take it! . . . Christ to me had become Life."

This is the usual but nevertheless remarkable story of miraculous experiences which have been repeated many times throughout Christian history. It suggests several comments. Eight years of missionary effort brought Stanley Jones face to face with the question of what was the right way to approach the highly developed mind in the educated castes of India. This problem perplexed him deeply and sorely. It brought a humiliating realization of his hopeless unpreparedness. When he thought of the immensely complicated conditions, social, political, intellectual, and religious, he became painfully aware of his intellectual deficiencies, and still more of his utter lack of the true and full Christian spirit. He was not Christian enough to meet the demands of the situation.

His situation suggests a New-Church parallel. In the early days, the problem of New-Churchmen was in part to overthrow doctrines which people professed to believe. This made it important to have some acquaintance with orthodox teachings, and also to have a working knowledge of the doctrines of the New Church. This called for and brought into exercise a certain degree of intellectual development. Accordingly, New-Church people got the reputation of being intellectual. But doctrinal controversy tended to become little more than verbal gymnastics; it did not develop the kind of understanding which positive and progressive doctrinal instruction called for. The rehearsal of doctrinal statements, however true and important the statements, becomes wearisome and to a certain degree meaningless, with the inevitable disappointment and indifference. Under these circumstances, it was natural that there should set in a reaction against dogmatic teaching, and that the reaction should extend to the doctrines themselves and to

Swedenborg's writings. The Church from the beginning has been plagued with these two vices: the habit of rehearsing the doctrines without understanding and interpretation, and the mood of reaction against this habit.

In the meantime, an important and extremely complicated change took place in the public mind. The unparalleled development of the mechanical sciences gave a new impulse and a new ground to materialistic and rationalistic thinking. The results of scientific method and scientific reasoning made some of the principal doctrines of traditional Christianity seem absurd; and consequently even professing Christians lost faith in these doctrines and were not interested to defend them. The commonplaces of religion and morality were accepted as the equivalent of specific Christian doctrines, and the reading public looked to science and philosophy for light upon life. This radical change in the situation in which New-Churchmen found themselves was at once disconcerting and perplexing. They were little prepared to meet such a situation. How to approach this new state of mind became their difficult and pressing question. They lacked the knowledge and the intellectual equipment to interpret their far-reaching doctrines to the complicated thought and interests of the day. Many yielded to the natural impulse to abandon the language of the doctrines and adopt that current speech, on the plea that we must speak a language that people can understand. This led to confusion and loss of effectiveness. The real and greatest difficulty was not a matter of language, but of the ideas and the thought, and most of all the situations to which language, ideas, and thought refer as the ground of their meaning. The whole field and context of the New-Church doctrines differ radically from the field and context of traditional orthodoxy and of popular thought which has grown out of it and reacts upon it.

There has been with us an earnest seeking for the right way, and a humiliating experience of unpreparedness. To adapt the language of Stanley Jones, we are not intellectu-

ally qualified, and we are not New-Church enough, to see and to pursue the right way. We need new light and new strength from on High. Like Stanley Jones, we need to make a complete surrender, but on a higher plane; we need to make a complete surrender to the Lord in His Second Coming in the spiritual sense of His Word. Stanley Jones made a complete surrender to the Lord as he knew Him, as He is described in the literal sense of the Gospels, the Jesus who lived the Godlike life in Palestine, and rose from the dead. The results were marvelous, as they have been in other such cases. William James's memorable studies in "Varieties of Religious Experience" demonstrate sufficiently the genuineness of such cases. But we need to go deeper into the nature of religious experience, and to distinguish levels of such experience. "The Christ of the Indian Road" is little more than a continuous rehearsal of incidents to illustrate the readiness of the Indian mind of all classes to accept the author's mode of presenting Christ, the Christ of his experience. There was of course in the informed Indian mind the *background* as given in the Gospel story, and Stanley Jones projected his "Christ experience" upon this background. When the background was lacking, as in the case of the uninformed lower castes, he himself furnished it by his recital. Stanley Jones's picture of Christ is the picture for the natural mind, the picture that is presented in the literal story of the Gospels. This is indeed a marvelously impressive picture, the picture which has lighted the way of the Christian Church down through the ages, and which has been for Christians the symbol of God's glory and power. But the history of the Christian Church shows, and the present condition of the Christian Church shows, that it has not raised, and does not raise, the thought and life of men to the distinctly spiritual level. Stanley Jones's religion, however genuine and effective within its range, is still the religion of natural thought and understanding. He interprets his religious experience in terms of natural ideas, in terms of natural human emotion and life, though often in

more or less figurative terms. This statement will no doubt surprise and shock some readers of "The Christ of the Indian Road," and call forth an earnest protest; but it would be difficult to point out a passage where a clear distinction is made between a spiritual and a natural state of mind. It is true that the word "spiritual" occurs, but it is used vaguely; it refers to a religious, not a distinctly spiritual, state of mind.

The New-Churchman is no less impressed by the Gospel picture of Christ than is the traditional orthodox Christian. For the New-Churchman, the man Jesus of the Gospel story is not merely the unique manifestation of God, but He is, as the name signifies, Jehovah Savior Himself; He is not the manifestation of God in the sense that God is another person than Himself. This would be a natural idea both of God and of Him. For spiritual thought, the historical Jesus of the Gospels was the Divine Love of saving men, a state of the infinite creative Love of the universe. He was this Love present and operative in His human body and human life—His human love, wisdom, and power; somewhat as a man's love of knowledge is present and operative in his love of mathematics, or his love of music is present and operative in the melody "Home Sweet Home." When this Love of saving men was fully worked out in the life among men and for men, His human love became perfect and Divine. Then the human love of saving men became one with the Divine love of creating and preserving both men and the universe as a whole. In this thought, the natural idea of person is preserved in the spiritual idea of love. So the natural idea of the Jesus of the Gospels is preserved in the spiritual idea of the Lord Jesus Christ glorified. The spiritual sense of the Bible, when learned and understood, gives us a body of doctrine which enables us to worship "Christ glorified" without neglecting "Christ crucified."

In seeking the right way, Stanley Jones found the way of projecting Jesus directly upon the background of the literal Gospel story. So we must find the way of projecting the glori-

fied Jesus upon the background of the body of spiritual doctrine drawn from the Word by Emanuel Swedenborg. It is no easy matter to acquire an adequate knowledge of this body of spiritual doctrine; it is a serious and endless task, but spiritual life is a serious and endless process. Some, all too many, have tried to avoid needed work of preparation, and have sought another way. They have adopted, and have urged others to adopt, the way of instilling the New-Church doctrines without proclaiming the source, without mentioning the name of Swedenborg, with the idea that people would become New-Churchmen without knowing it. They dread the mention of the New-Church doctrines, or the name of Swedenborg, lest they arouse prejudice and opposition. But this is an attempt to present New-Church doctrines upon the background of the traditional orthodox state of mind; and so our doctrines get quite another meaning from that which they have on a New-Church background. It is one of the fundamental principles of religious education that old errors must be cleared away before the truth can be received. It is also a recognized principle in secular education that we must begin where the pupils are and lead them to new knowledge. We apply these principles when we learn as fully as possible the state of the public mind, especially the latest phases of the public mind, and at the same time acquire an adequate knowledge of the body of New-Church doctrines; only then shall we be in a position to teach New-Church doctrines effectively and in purity. We have often heard New-Church people say: "I feel perfectly helpless, when some one asks me, What is your Church? What does your Church teach different from other Churches?" We are more or less familiar with statements of our doctrines, but the right form of statement does not occur to us at the moment; the difficulty is to concentrate our knowledge in a way adapted to the mind of the questioner. The only way to meet this situation, and to be prepared for it, is to take the time and devote the labor necessary to acquire the knowledge which such occasions call for, a knowledge

of the public mind and a knowledge of our body of doctrine.

New-Church people should be prepared to answer such questions intelligently and satisfactorily, but they should be able to do *more;* they should be able, in the light of the *spiritual meaning* of the Bible, to interpret life, their own life and the life of others, more clearly and more fully. Our professed belief that the Lord has made His Second Coming in the Spiritual Sense of His Word imposes upon us the sacred obligation to make a supreme and constant effort to seek and find Him there. This is no ordinary undertaking, and because of its exceeding difficulty, we have shirked the obligation and the opportunity. It is a very different kind of effort from the usual one of seeking the Lord in emotion or in ecstatic feeling. No doubt the Lord is present in such feeling in a very significant and important way; but He is present in a still more significant and important way in our intelligent acknowledgment of Him on the level of spiritual thought and will. Emotion and feeling may be spiritual, not however by virtue of mere intensity, but by being lifted on the wings of thought to a higher level of light and intelligence. Emotion or ecstatic feeling may or may not issue in proper conduct, in a changed practical life, in permanent "conversion." But spiritual understanding and a spiritual will imply a clear and firm grasp of definite principles of both thought and conduct, and also a constantly and consistently regulated course of feeling and action. For this is what *spiritual life* is. Spiritual life is not merely sublimated thought and sentiment, however intense and highly charged with emotion; it is a level of thought and at the same time a quality of feeling, and a course of conduct directed by such thought and feeling. Spiritual life is, above all, life from the Lord on the level of definite and intelligent thought about the qualities of the Lord's love and wisdom, and at the same time thought from the Lord. The Lord's life is love and wisdom, not something other than love and wisdom, or prior to love and wisdom. The Lord's love at the spiritual level is His love

for men. The Lord's love for men is their very life; His love in every man is the love of other men, and so the love of all through each and of each through all. This is the origin, the fact, and the meaning of brotherly love, of love to the neighbor. These are some of the Divine qualities of the Lord's love.

To understand the presence and operation of the Lord in man, we must know something of the several degrees, or levels, of His presence and operation. This is necessary in order to see the difference between His presence and operation in the natural man and His presence and operation in the spiritual man. In other words, we must look further into the nature of love. The Lord's love is operative in us and through us whether we know it or not, just as it operates in animals and plants, although they have no knowledge of it. But the fact that the Lord's love operates in animals and plants does not make them spiritual, in the religious sense of the word. Animals and plants have no knowledge of the Lord and of His love as their life, and because of this lack of knowledge their life is on the sense and vegetative level. The characteristic difference, stated in psychological terms, between man and animal is that man perceives *relations* of various kinds and degrees; animals do not perceive relations distinctly and in the abstract, though they may sense them, feel them instinctively. This is ordinarily expressed by saying that animals do not have souls, or if they do, they have animal souls, not rational souls, as men have.

All this means that there are different levels, or degrees of life, or love. With this understanding, we may say, quite properly, that the life of plants is love, love on the plant level, and that the varieties of plant life or plant forms are the many forms of love on the plant level. All the wonders of plant growth, and all the beauties of plant forms, of foliage and flowers, are forms of love; and as all love is wise, and manifests itself as wisdom, the beauties and varieties of plant forms are expressions of wisdom, and cor-

respond to the wisdom of which they are the expression. Swedenborg tells us that when we consider attentively with some elevation of thought the myriad things of the universe, we see that each and every one of them is so full of love and wisdom that they may be said to be love and wisdom. This is the first definite statement that the universe is spiritual, spiritual in the metaphysical sense of the term. In the language of Correspondences we say that plants correspond to plans. It is obvious that not only plants but rocks have a structure, and so imply a plan of structure. A lump of gold or a grain of sand seems to ordinary observation to be a continuous, homogeneous, solid body, but examined more closely, under a high powered microscope, it is found to have a structure, and the deeper the examination goes the more elaborate and wonderful the structure is seen to be. So, if structure implies plan and plan implies thought, we must say that the lump of gold or the grain of sand is a form of love and wisdom. These results and conclusions seem so far removed from our ordinary observations and experience, that we balk at accepting them spontaneously and without good reason. Any one who has gazed at the glass flowers in the Agassiz Museum at Harvard University has been struck with amazement at the complexity and beauty of the flowers and their structure. The same wonderment strikes us when we examine vegetable tissue under a microscope. Plants, however, have not only structure and organization, they have change, internal movement, growth; they have life, they are life, which means that they are love, love in the most varied forms of expression, forms of love and wisdom. So, we may say that the universe is spiritual, which the Christian doctrine of creation implies and has affirmed, but that more specifically and significantly it is love and wisdom, on many levels, of many degrees. In short, as our doctrine of creation directly implies, the endless variety and complexity of things are the many expressions of Divine Love and Wisdom. The Lord as love and wisdom is present and operative in them each and all according

to capacity of reception. Furthermore, as we are taught, the Divine is the same in greatest and in leasts. The love which is present and operative in the grain of sand is the love of the whole material universe. The Lord's presence and operation as love and wisdom in the floweret of the crannied wall is the love of the entire vegetable creation. On a higher level, the Lord's presence and operation as love and wisdom in ant and bee, in bird and beast, is the love of the animal kingdom in its whole extent.

All this is to fix our attention on the fact that the Lord is present and operative in all things at various levels according to capacity of reception. This is true universally, but it is of special importance when we come to treat of the Lord's presence and operation in man, and more especially in the religious man. As a matter of fact, the Lord is present and operative in man whether he knows it or not, his very existence as man depends upon this; but He is more fully and effectively present and operative in the man who knows and acknowledges it. It follows from the principle that the ception, that He is present and operative in our knowledge Lord is present and operative according to capacity of re- and acknowledgment of Him. It is this fact that makes the difference between the religious and the non-religious or irreligious man. We often hear it said that if a man lives a good life, it makes no difference what his belief is, and so a man is truly religious if he lives a moral life. Putting aside the question as to what is meant by a "good life," it is clear that a man is not truly religious who does not live a moral life. But, as the present age needs to be told with impressive effectiveness, a moral life is one thing and a religious life another. No doubt, many people live a merely formal and conventional religious life, and too often make the forms of religion a cloak for immorality and wickedness, but this does not make morality and genuine religion identical. The distinction may be made in terms of directive purpose: a moral life is directed by one's own will quite independent of any thought of God; a religious life

is directed by a knowledge of God and His Will. In thinking about the difference between the merely moral man and the religious man, it is highly important to bear constantly in mind that the Lord is present and operative in all men, in the merely natural and the moral man as well as in the religious, but according to the way and degree of reception in each case. The merely natural man, when there is such a thing, lives solely for sense pleasures and satisfactions, and the Lord is present and operative in these, and in his knowledge and thought about these. The strictly moral man lives to realize certain accepted and approved purposes and ends, and he subordinates his sense life in the pursuit of these purposes and ends. The Lord is present and operative in the pursuit of these, and in the knowledge, the desires, and the thought of them. It is the Lord's presence and operation in man that gives him the consciousness and satisfactions of his sense and moral life. But the Lord's presence and operation do not make the merely natural man religious, any more than they make plants and animals religious. What distinguishes the religious man is not the fact of the Lord's presence and operation in him, but his knowledge and acknowledgment of the fact, and his determination and effort to live in accordance with the requirements of this knowledge and acknowledgment.

Here we must make the distinction between the religious man and the Christian. A Christian is of course a religious man, but a religious man may or may not be a Christian. There are many different religions in the world, which vary with the idea of God entertained in each. The Christian, in a sense, and with greater or less clearness and consistency, worships the Lord Jesus Christ as God. The story of the Gospels is accepted by Christians as a unique description of the nature of God. But the Christian idea of God has been modified and qualified by the influence of Greek thought and Roman legal procedure. As a consequence, the orthodox traditional Christian idea of God has

been seriously and disastrously complicated with metaphysical and legalistic theories. But centrally, the basis of the Christian idea of God was the impression the Lord as man among men made upon His disciples. This impression, to say nothing of the letter of Scripture, gave natural ideas of God and of the Lord as the manifestation of God. For Christian thought, therefore, the Lord has been a natural man, though with superhuman powers and qualities, and consequently the Christian religion, as illustrated by Christian hymns, has been expressed in natural language, used more or less figuratively. Accordingly, the basis of the ordinary traditional Christian religion is laid in a body of natural ideas and natural thought about God and about religious life. It is of vital and critical importance to establish this thesis in order to get an adequate understanding of the relation between what we call the "Old Church" and the New Church. This would enable us to see clearly that the Lord laid the basis of His future Church in the knowledge, understanding, and life of the natural man, and especially in the development of his natural rationality. But for the perversity of men, this development would have been normal and proper. On the contrary, as history shows only too impressively, the development took place in the direction of self-confident and self-sufficient naturalistic rationalism. In either case, the Lord's Second Coming was inevitable, for upon this natural development a superposed spiritual development was needed. The Lord must come, as He promised, in the clouds of heaven and in great glory, that is, in the spiritual truth of His Word. The task before Christianity now is to make the transition from the natural to the spiritual. The natural minded Christianity of the past is no longer sufficient or effective, as the present day chaotic state of religion and morals abundantly testifies. The new Christianity must be a development of Christian thought and feeling on a distinctly higher plane, not merely a correction, a purification, or an intensification of the natural minded Christianity of the past. The various religious re-

vivals of the past and of the present serve to keep the Christian experience alive, and this service was essential to the life of the Church. But these revivals, in so far as they are based upon natural ideas and feelings, however sublimated and emotionalized, do not meet the requirements of the present situation. The experience of conversion may be (perhaps should be) gradual, or it may be sudden, violent, and ecstatic; it may be highly emotional, or it may be quietly deliberate. The one is apt to be natural, the other is more likely to be spiritual; the one may be in some cases at least a preparation for the other. In any case, what we need is to pass from the natural to the spiritual; and not only to rise from the natural to the spiritual in thought and feeling, but to bring the spiritual down into natural thought and feeling, into the conduct of life. It is difficult to do this in thought, it is still more difficult to do it in practice.

We are so familiar with the contrast between the natural and the spiritual that it is only when we make a deliberate effort to be definite and consistent that we find ourselves in difficulty. The word "natural" is commonly used in various senses ambiguously. Most commonly, perhaps, it is used in referring to nature, to the material world of bodies and their behavior. In contrast with this the word "spiritual" is used in referring to the inner world of mind, thought, ideas, etc. These two uses are summed up in the phrase, "the world of matter and the world of spirit." With this contrast in mind, Swedenborg says that speech and action are natural, but affection and thought are spiritual. It must be said, however, that this use of the terms is psycho-physical and metaphysical. The word "natural" is also used in referring to what is normal, fitting, or essential. In this sense we speak of natural affection, natural thought, natural behavior, in contrast artificial, sentimental, or perverted. Here we are making a distinction within the above defined field of the spiritual, and the meaning of the word "natural" becomes ambiguous. The ambiguity is aggravated when Swedenborg speaks of the natural, rational, intellectual, moral,

and spiritual. The complication becomes most serious when we pass to the field of religion. Here we have not only the contrast between natural and spiritual thought, but also that between natural and revealed, natural religion being those attempts to reach ideas of God through the study of nature; in contrast with this, revealed religion is based upon the acceptance of the Bible as giving us the only proper knowledge of God. Here again, as found in the Bible, we have natural ideas of God and also spiritual. The Jews, it is clear, had a natural idea of God when they thought of the expected Messiah as the future all-powerful king of Israel and of his political kingdom. It is obvious that the literal sense of the Bible gives us natural ideas of God in a great many instances. But we read also that God is Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. The contrast here is with the worship of Him in natural ideas and affections, and as Jewish history shows, such worship is apt to be false. This brings us face to face with the distinction between natural and spiritual worship.

The Jews, for the most part, worshipped God as an arbitrary king, with the exalted virtues of a good king, but with some of the vices and weaknesses of a bad king. Although omnipotent and omniscient, and in some mysterious way omnipresent, the God of the Jews was in their thought a natural man, and in the main was worshipped as a natural man. So too among Christians, for the most part, the Lord is thought of as a natural man, and worshipped as a natural man, though exalted on high.

This kind of religion is inadequate for the life of today. It is exposed to devastating attacks from naturalism and rationalism, and, since it lacks spiritual intelligence, is liable to all sorts of delusions, perversions, and abuses. Its fundamental defect is that it thinks and judges in the light of our habitual natural ideas and standards, and therefore fails to get the help of distinctly spiritual light. To become convinced of this, all we have to do is to look around upon the life of the day, and see the widespread moral and religious

confusion and degradation; witness the moral level of the pictures we see in the movies and of the popular novels. We see in these cases what people like and enjoy. And yet people are not entirely and permanently satisfied with this kind of life. They have aspirations, ideas, ideals, vague longings for something better. All these they call spiritual, but unless such states are enlightened by distinctly spiritual knowledge, they are little better than vague undefined emotions and sentiments.

The remedy for this state of things is more definite spiritual knowledge and more successful effort in distinguishing the natural from the spiritual in general and in particular. It would seem superfluous, if not inappropriate, to emphasize the spiritual in New-Church circles, but evidence is strikingly abundant that New-Church people give comparatively little attention to the work of gaining clear and distinct spiritual knowledge. We all profess to believe that the Lord has made His Second Coming in the spiritual sense of His Word, and yet it seems that we make little effort to learn, understand, and apply the teachings of the spiritual sense. Why is this? It is not because we have no doctrine to light our way. Moreover, we have a supreme object lesson in passing from the natural to the spiritual in the literal and spiritual senses of the Bible; nevertheless our preaching, teaching, and writing show little evidence of taking this lesson to heart. This doctrine of the spiritual sense is not altogether new and strange. All Bible readers have been familiar with the fact that much of the language of the Bible must be taken figuratively, allegorically, as the language of parable, although some Christians have professed a strict literalism. Even when we read the Bible reverently and attentively for its precise meaning for communion with the Lord and for the conduct of life, we are often baffled by its figures, its allegories, and its parables; we get vague impressions and suggestions, but we find it hard to get definite instruction. For example, it is common knowledge that the Holy Land stands figuratively for

heaven, that the story of the Exodus is an allegory for the course of regeneration, that the crossing of the Jordan means passing from the unregenerate to the regenerate state; then we have the parable of the Sower, and other parables. Such interpretations, though true and helpful as far as they go, are more or less vague; they do not give us the direct and definite knowledge we need of heaven and of regeneration. The Sun of Righteousness is another familiar and glorious figure of speech, but a vague one; it does not give us any specific knowledge of the Lord. But when we are taught that the Lord has made His Second Coming in the spiritual truth of His Word, and when we are taught, as Swedenborg does teach in the "Arcana Cœlestia" and in his two books on the Apocalypse, what this spiritual truth is, passage by passage, verse by verse, and often word by word, we go beyond the region of figure and allegory to definite instruction. We may still speak of the Sun of Righteousness, meaning the Lord, but in the language of correspondences we see that it means the Lord as love working righteousness in men, and further we see that the word "sun" is used in the Lord's Word throughout to mean in the spiritual sense love. Sometimes, according to context, Divine Love, sometimes unselfish human love, sometimes love perverted in self-love. For example, the first chapter of Genesis we read of the sun; it is clear that heavenly love is meant. But when we read in the Book of Revelation that in the New Jerusalem there will be no need of the sun, we understand that self-love is meant. If now we follow the occurrences of the word "sun" throughout the Word, we have the immense help and satisfaction of finding that the passages shine with new and clearer light, in all instances some degree of spiritual light. There is no better way than this experiment to illustrate and demonstrate to the uninitiated Bible reader that the Lord's Word has a spiritual sense from beginning to end, and that spiritual meaning is definite and consistent. So we could take many other key words and various topics and have the same uplifting and enlightening experience. The discovery of this dis-

tinct, definite, consistent spiritual meaning marks a new and transcendent era in religious and Christian history; it raises Bible reading to a new level, and brings the Lord's presence to the minds and lives of men with a new degree of fulness and light; it is what is most needed to make the Bible a living Book for this rationalizing and perverted age; it raises religion from the natural to the spiritual level. The world is in desperate need of just this help, help in the effort to rise into spiritual light. We know from our own experience and observation, and may also learn from the reports of acute and comprehensive students, that the world is so steeped in naturalism that only Divine agency is sufficient to lift it to higher light, to lift it to the level of clear and definite spiritual thinking.

To sum up. Our present thesis is that the religion represented by the conventional revival and conversion experience is on the natural level, and as such is inadequate to meet the requirements of this sophisticated age, so deeply immersed in the philosophies of naturalism and rationalism, and obsessed by them. We have selected Stanley Jones's account not to discredit it, but, with full recognition of its Christian genuineness and importance, to show that, as typical of effective conversion and revival experience throughout Christian history, it is religion and Christianity on the natural level, and as such is lacking the spiritual knowledge and light needed to make it in the full sense real Christianity, Christianity on the spiritual level.

The doctrines of the Second Coming, the light which the Lord has revealed in the spiritual sense of His Word, the light which we may find there, if we make use of the doctrines of the New Jerusalem, given to us in the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg,—these doctrines and this light give us the needed equipment to become Christians in the full sense of the word, real Christians. We proclaim our belief in these doctrines, and so far we are members of the Lord's New Church. But this is not far enough; we need to take the next step, we need to get the meaning and to pass to the

application of the doctrines. This next step then is to make use of the doctrines to learn, understand, and apply the spiritual truth in which the Lord is present to us individually and collectively. This is the path to real Christianity, and this is our task, imposed upon us by our common belief and by the Lord's command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature."

Lewis F. Hite.

THOUGHTS ABOUT SPIRITUAL TIME AND SPACE

By Mary Seward Coster

I SOMETIMES wonder whether, when we reach the other world, we may not find spiritual time and space much more real than we generally suppose that they will be. Swedenborg so often repeats in his Writings that there is no time or space in the spiritual world that it seems as though we could rightly count these things out in our thoughts about the spiritual plane of life. And yet he says that there is something to which time and space correspond; and this something, being spiritual, must be even more important in conditioning spiritual life than are the time and space that we know so well in nature. And again, this world is made in correspondence with the spiritual world just so that all outer and natural truths may form a firm basis for our conceptions of higher and more spiritual truths. If this is so, the onward march of time, with its alternating periods of darkness and light and with its changing and progressive seasons, has something vital to teach us about spiritual conditions of life; and likewise the vastness of the natural universe, and its separating distances that spur men to find ways of overcoming, are a basis for spiritual knowledge also. There would be no such thing as natural time and natural space, if there was not also something in the spiritual world to which these correspond. I wonder whether it would be right to call these correspondences spiritual time and spiritual space, and in this way to make them something very definite, something that, to spirits, are as well known as natural time and natural space are to us?

In thinking of this subject we must realize fully that in the Lord, and from Him directly, there is neither time nor

space in either the natural meaning of these words or in their spiritual correspondence. The past and the future are ever present in His Divine Wisdom; and His Love knows nothing of nearness or of distance. Each one of His children, wherever he may be either in this world or in the other, is equally under His loving care and protection; and He is giving to each one equally the blessings of His Presence. Time and space have nothing to do with His Infinity. There is no limit to His Love and Wisdom, and therefore there can be no limiting Him with any conditions of the natural or of the spiritual world. But there *is* a limit to man's acceptance of love and wisdom from the Lord, and it is this limitation that accounts for time and space on the spiritual plane of life. There is time and space spiritually just because men are what they are—varying forms of love and wisdom, but not Love and Wisdom itself.

Spiritually the Lord is near to us all because He is loving us all. Spiritually we are near to those we are loving, and distant from those with whom we are not in close, loving relationship. This nearness and distance will seem as real to us when we enter the spiritual world as space seems real to us in this world. It will be as real as we know the limitations of our love to be real. We shall find ourselves near to those whom we love, and we shall see in the distance others whom we have not yet learned to love. This is spiritual space. It is an outer picture of our inner states of mind and heart.

Space, as we know it here, will not be found there; for if our love reached out to others, we should find ourselves immediately near to them. But it is because our love is not infinite, is not constant, and is not unchangeable, that the spiritual world will seem so vast to us, and that we shall find ourselves sometimes here, sometimes there in it. It is not the seeming space that is real, but it is ourselves and our limitations and our changing states of life that are real, and that will be pictured forth in all the apparent space and apparent time there. In this world, if we would reach those

who are distant from us, we only have to buy tickets, board trains or boats, and be carried to our destination. Traveling spiritually is a far greater achievement, and maybe something a bit harder for us to accomplish. It means that our love must extend beyond its present capacity. It means going out to others who are different from us. It means a very real change of mind and heart, or, as Swedenborg expresses it, a "change of state." Distant traveling in the spiritual world may even take time, involving progressive changes of state, before we can reach those who are separated from us by large differences of outlook; but Swedenborg tells us that any journey may be made by any angel who has love great enough to make it.

This spiritual nearness to and distance from others is something that we are well acquainted with even in our life here. We are living in the spiritual world at the same time that we are in the natural world, and our lives here are conditioned by spiritual laws just as they are by natural ones. Over and over again we have experienced the truth of the spiritual law that similarity of love conjoins people, while dissimilarity causes separation. We have had the beautiful experience of being very close to others spiritually, and we have felt the joy of that nearness. We have known what it is to be heart to heart and mind to mind with others, and we know that this is a far more genuine nearness than any mere propinquity can ever be. I wonder whether there is anything that brings us greater joy than the feeling of oneness that comes when a large group of people is united by some common love and enthusiasm. The heart thrills in unison with all other hearts, and is warmed by a joy that no independent joy can ever bring. For the moment there is no spiritual distance. A love of something so great that it is shared in common by all of a large group has brought them all close together, and they remain together as long as this love is uppermost.

We know too, from experience, how real the spiritual distances can be. We have felt them too, and we know that

they have nothing to do with miles or leagues as the world measures space. Sometimes we are so far away from people spiritually that we cannot catch even a glimpse of their viewpoint, nor they of ours, even though externally we may be sitting in the same room with them. It would take no effort at all to change our seats so that we should be sitting close to them naturally; but it would take a big mental effort, backed by a very willing heart, to get so close to them spiritually that we could, with sympathetic understanding, see things as they see them. To cover this spiritual distance is a very real achievement.

The inventions that are bringing such wonderful changes into the world of today by overcoming natural space, are bringing out in stronger light than ever the spiritual law of love, the fact that in reality it is love alone that conjoins and dissimilarity of love that separates. We are beginning to see that the overcoming of natural space does not bring us into closer relationship with every one whom we can now easily reach. The ease of reaching another does not necessarily bring one close to him. It is a desire to be near him that is needed, and without this desire, we do not avail ourselves of the easy means of communication. The telephone that stands on the table beside me can connect me with millions of people, and yet it does not do so. The power is there, but I only use the power as desire dictates. And others avail themselves of their ability to reach me only as they desire to do so. The telephone, that can bring people together so easily naturally, does not affect the working of the inner and spiritual law of love.

The radio that is near me can also bring right into my home much that is going on in the outside world; but it is my love that tunes in and that gives a welcome to the programs of my choice; and all the things that I do not care to hear are as far away from me practically as though the radio did not exist. And conversely, the man standing at the microphone, knowing that he is in a position where he may be able to reach millions of people, knows also that he

can compel no one to listen. Probably as time goes on, and as we are the more easily in touch with others naturally, we shall the more fully realize that similarity of love, and this alone, has the power to bring people together.

As long as we are in this world, our lives will be conditioned both by natural and by spiritual space and time; but because the natural conditions appear the more real to us, we seldom speak, or even think, of the deeper and spiritual ways of being near to, or distant from, others. When we enter the other life, however, there will be only spiritual space and spiritual time. Swedenborg tells us that this spiritual space will seem so much like natural space, and spiritual time will seem so similar to the time that we have known here, that we shall at first think in the old, familiar, natural ways of what we see there. Then later on we shall learn to interpret them differently. Our experiences of life there will lead us to see that nearness and distance are no longer governed by the outside laws of nature, but altogether by the inside laws of love. Then we shall love in a new way the vastness of the heavens. We shall love all its seeming space, for it will speak to us of the great wonder of the Lord's love, and will tell us something of the many, many different ways in which that love is bringing joy to countless numbers of people besides ourselves. There, as here, the heavens will declare the glory of God and the firmament will show His handiwork; but it will not be an infinity of space that we shall see, but rather an infinity of love, a heavenly universe ever so much vaster than our own individual love can ever be. We shall love to know that beyond us, and ever beyond us, is love that we have never experienced, love in the hearts of angels who are happy in ways that we have never known. And all the time will be the happy realization that sometime we may visit these distant places, no matter where they are; for by means of the power of the Lord's love all distance can be overcome. We love to travel here; but think how much more wonderful it will be to travel there!

Maybe it is because Swedenborg always speaks of the appearances of space and time rather than of their reality that we have always thought of them in a rather negative way. Apparent truth has seemed to us truth that is to be outgrown. We have thought that this natural world is an exterior world of appearances, and that on entering the spiritual world, we shall be entering the world of reality, the world of all the deeper truths of life. But as a matter of fact the other world is a world of apparent truth, just as this one is. Absolute truth is in the Lord alone, and as it proceeds from Him it is adapted to our varying capacity to receive it. We never see the deep, deep underlying truth, but only truth as it appears to us. The external things of that world will still be but outer correspondences of truths that are on a more interior plane; and the deepest truths that we can ever see will be but apparent truths that still outwardly express some deeper and more genuine truth. And yet these apparent truths will seem very real to us, just as the appearances of truth that we see here seem so real that some men think that they embrace all of truth.

When Swedenborg refers to time and space as being apparent and not real, he is telling us two things. He is telling us about the Lord and about the all-conquering love that He has to give us, and how this love can break down everything that there is in man that separates him from others. And He is telling us of how little of all this love men receive, and of how very gradually men draw from this Fountain of Life. He is telling us that there will always be an appearance of space and time, because we shall always be conscious of our own limitations, and we shall see beyond ourselves much of love and of wisdom that we have not yet made our own. The other world will stretch out before our eyes vast in the vastness of the Lord's Love, and yet with nothing that keeps us from going to its farthest limits except our own limitations. And high above the heavens will be the glory of the Heavenly Sun, the outpouring of the Lord's Love and Wisdom, whose power is drawing all men

to Himself, and yet whose Love suffers each one of us to receive as much or as little of this love as we desire. It is we, and not the Lord, who make the distance between Him and us; and it is the limitation of the love that we receive from Him, and its consequent individuality, that places us in the varying relations to other men spiritually.

Swedenborg tells us that in all life's development angels never reach the state of life where spiritual space and time disappear. They well know that spatial dimensions and directions are only apparent, that they are only the outer pictures of the inner states of life of spirits; but these appearances will always be there, because there will always be these differing states of life. And likewise the past, the present, and the future will to them seem distinct, though they will love to realize that with the Lord both the past and the future is in everything of the present. Their view can never be as inclusive as His. How living these appearances of time and space are, Swedenborg illustrates by saying that "The appearance is as living and as real as that life itself is in us and therefore our own, when yet life flows in from the Lord."

I am wondering whether we should not be nearer the truth if, instead of saying that there is no time or space spiritually, we said that there was none Divinely, but that spiritually it does exist. Is not Swedenborg, when he says that there is no time or space in the spiritual world, referring to natural and not to spiritual time and space?

MARY SEWARD COSTER.

OUR HERITAGE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

By the Rev. Jedediah Edgerton

EVERY heritage implies responsibilities among its legatees; and among these responsibilities is not only the enjoyment of the gift or property bequeathed, but also an understanding of the terms of the bequest, an entering into the spirit and intention of the donor, an appreciation of the life and sacrifices of the testator as he built up his fortune, and above all a spirit of thankfulness for the gift bestowed, and the high resolution that this heritage shall be transmitted unsullied to future generations. Therefore for a short time let us, as Isaiah said, "Look unto the rock" whence we were hewn, and consider the heritage that is ours.

Our democracy with its representative government, its political and religious liberty, its freedom of speech, of the press, and of action, are guaranteed to us by two immortal documents,—the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution of the United States. They form, as it were, two pillars of the arch of democracy, and upon their solidarity, integrity, and observance, the whole fabric of our civilization depends. It should be our pride to visit our National Capitol, and proceeding to the Library of Congress gaze in patriotic devotion upon these two documents which are the embodiment of American ideals.

But coming nearer home, let us encourage our youth to visit Lexington, the "Birthplace of American Liberty." Approaching the apex of the Lexington Green, and noting the stalwart statue of Captain John Parker, with one foot advanced, rifle in hand, let them resolve to take their stand in like manner with the ballot in hand against the encroachments of evil that threaten our land today. And then standing before that boulder which marks the line of the Minute Men and whose inscription reads,

"Stand your ground;
Don't fire unless fired upon;
But if they mean to have war,
Let it begin here",

let them resolve to take their stand upon the questions of the day, and resist like the rock before them all attempts to violate the Constitution and undermine the Republic. Then crossing the Lexington Common with reverential tread, let them stand with bared heads before that time-worn slab, "sacred to liberty and the rights of mankind," which marks the last resting place of those seven Lexington patriots who fell in the cause of freedom. Of these men, Webster said, "They poured out their generous blood like water, before they knew whether it would fertilize the land of freedom or of bondage." Then before leaving let them stop at the famous Hancock-Clarke House, where Paul Revere stopped to arouse Samuel Adams and John Hancock, "who had been attending the Provincial Congress at Concord." And standing before the silent drum that was beaten at the Battle of Lexington by William Diamond, may their muffled heartbeats keep time with the imagined rhythm thereof.

In this manner and by the power of example let us stimulate in the youth of the nation patriotic devotion, teach them the cost of democracy, the richness of their heritage and the price paid for the flag, whose red is the blood of our citizens, whose white is the purity of our womanhood, and whose blue is the truth of our institutions.

Not only are we rich in our historical heritage, but we are also fortunate in our literary legacy. A few miles from our home in Lexington is Walden Pond, where lived that apostle of the simple life, Henry David Thoreau. Here it was that "this shy haunter of the woods," living close to nature on twenty-seven cents a week, with the animals as his friends and the birds as his guests, left us the heritage of his observations upon nature, frugality and economy, and the union of simplicity of life with cheerfulness of disposition.

Time forbids us to speak of "the sage of Concord"; but we cannot leave that famous town without mentioning that "house by the side of the road," where lived one of the masters of prose fiction, Nathaniel Hawthorne. And how may we account for this romanticist who enriched the world by his "Scarlet Letter," "Twice Told Tales," and "The House of Seven Gables"? Did the death of his father when Nathaniel was only four years of age make him more thoughtful than other boys? Did the boyhood years spent with his mother on the lonely shores of Sebago Lake, Maine, turn his thoughts to the spiritual and eternal? Or did his Puritan ancestry contribute an element of religious fervor to his soul? Or did the part of his life spent in Salem, the home of witchcraft, add the spirit of mysticism to the sombre background of his mind? And when we see him forced to leave off writing on account of the meager sale of his manuscripts, and accept a position in the custom-house at Salem, where his poetic soul spent itself in weary hours of checking grains and produce, we see the incongruities of human existence and the price paid for the development of genius.

And it becomes our privilege and duty as parents and teachers and leaders to point out to the youth of the nation their literary heritage, and train them in an appreciation of their literary legacy, that they may enjoy good literature, and acquire standards of literary excellence from American authors that will act as a mighty magnet, attracting the best in current literature, and repelling the baser.

In art we can only faintly compute our heritage by visiting museums such as the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, and, sitting before some masterpiece, take the time to study the picture. But if we only see the history of art, or its technique, or the various periods or schools, or pleasing combinations of colors, we are no better thereby; it is only as we raise ourselves from the natural delineations of the picture to the spiritual qualities represented, that such study is worthwhile. And when we see the eternal behind the

temporal, the Divine behind the commonplace, and the spiritual within the natural, then art lives for us, and we enter into the richness of our artistic heritage with an appreciative understanding and a responsive heart. If we visit this particular museum, let us not leave before we have seen those delicate busts carved by the sculptor, Hiram Powers, that talented New-Churchman who said, "Swedenborg is my author; all other writers in comparison seem moving in the dark with tapers in hand, groping their way, while he moves in the broad light of the sun."

Last but not least in those forces that have moulded the life of New England and constitute our richest heritage, is the contribution of religion. In the colonial period no doubt the Congregationalists and Presbyterians with their Puritan ancestry played the most important part; and upon the colonies they stamped the virtues of independence, industry, and conscientiousness. Convinced that there was a Divine Providence operating in the affairs of men, they turned to the Scriptures for daily guidance, and left to the world an example of piety and devotion unparalleled in the history of religion.

Among the Baptists, Roger Williams was the most notable early example. John Fiske says of this intrepid pioneer in religion, "The views of Williams, if logically carried out, involved the entire separation of church from the state, the equal protection of all forms of religious faith, the repeal of all laws compelling attendance upon public worship, the abolition of tithes and of all forced contributions to the support of religion." Such views are today the accepted standards of Protestantism, and show the saneness and broadmindedness of Roger Williams. Their wisdom and foresight led them to found Brown University, whose influence and culture can not be estimated.

The influence and power of the Episcopalians is too well known among us to need any comment. Suffice to say that they are the true churchmen, and that their insistence upon form and ritual has added dignity to religion and at the

same time has preserved as in a chalice the sweet wine of spiritual worship.

Nor would our roster of spiritual heritage be complete without that of Methodism. John Wesley was the one man who by his devotion, organizing ability, and power to move men by the spoken word, set on fire all England as he preached in lanes, meadows, and highways the "unsearchable riches of Christ."

Every true New-Churchman has had the experience of being elevated into a divine atmosphere when reading the Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, especially the "Arcana Cœlestia." He duplicates the feelings of Robert Hindmarsh, the father of the organized New Church, who said that, when first introduced to the Writings, he read them with the "utmost avidity, and instantly perceived their contents to be of heavenly origin." Those who have not experienced this spiritual joy in the inspired Writings of the Seer will belittle such a statement. Such are apt to say that the Writings are not necessary in the development of the spiritual life, and that the Second Coming in the spiritual sense of the Word is fanciful and visionary. These are the enemies of the New Church; for they regard all her teachings with aversion and contempt. While we pity them for their spiritual deafness and moral blindness, we can not allow them to prejudice the minds of our children against the Inner Light of the Word, nor permit them to uproot in the minds of adults who have lately come into the Church and who therefore are babes in Christ, the heavenly truths but lately planted.

But these enemies can never persuade a real New-Churchman, whose spiritual eyes have been opened to see within the bush of the literal sense of the Word the burning light of the spiritual, to leave off reading the Writings of the Seer of the New Church. They might as well try to persuade a patriot to leave his native land for an unattractive country, or a groom to abandon his beautiful bride adorned in robes and jewels for a slattern clothed in rags. This joy

from the Word is the same as that experienced by the psalmist when he wrote of the godly man, "His delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law he meditates day and night."

Nor should we think it a strange thing that such delight and joy arise from the Word of God; for John says in his Gospel, "The Word was God," and we are led to believe that the Holy Spirit is the Divine Truth as found in the Word. In fact, Swedenborg asserts in the "Spiritual Diary," n. 6025, "To deny the Divine of the Lord, and to despise the Word, is to sin against the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the Divine Truth, that is, the Word teaching the Divine of the Lord."

And I want to ask if the spiritual sense of the Word, and especially the inmost sense, does not treat of the Lord and how He made his human Divine, and accomplished the glorification of his humanity? Therefore when we read and perceive the Inner Truth of the Word, we are acknowledging the Divine of the Lord and the holiness of the Word. Furthermore Swedenborg says in "Apocalypse Revealed," n. 778:

> By the Holy Spirit (*Spiritum sanctum*) is meant the Lord as to Divine Truth (*Divinum Verum*) such as it is in the heavens; that is, the Word such as it is in the spiritual sense (*sensu spirituali*), for this is the Divine Truth in heaven.

Here we have it as plainly as it could be stated that the spiritual sense is the Holy Spirit, or the Divine Truth as it is in heaven. Is it any wonder then that we New-Churchmen love the deeper sense of the Word with such a holy passion, and derive such delight from the contemplation thereof? I have previously remarked that the spiritual exposition of the Word as given to the world through Emanuel Swedenborg constitutes the greatest outpouring of the Holy Spirit yet vouchsafed to humanity; and when we perceive this Inner Light, and come in contact with this Divine Truth such as it is in heaven, we come under the influence and teachings of the Holy Spirit.

That is why Robert Hindmarsh braved the materialism

of his day, and in the face of criticism and opposition determined, as he says, "to form a society for the purpose of spreading the great truths contained in them" (the Writings). He continues:

> I expected at first, that almost every person of sound judgment, or even of common sense, would receive them with the same facility as I did myself, and would rejoice with me that so great a treasure had at length been found in the Church.

But Robert Hindmarsh had forgotten for the time the spiritual scene in the twelfth chapter of Revelation, where the woman clothed with the sun was about to give birth to a male child. Swedenborg assures us that the woman represents the New Church in the heavens and on the earth, and that the twelve stars signify the knowledges of Divine Good and Divine Truth from the Word. Now the woman was great with child, which signifies the doctrines of the New Church; and her pain at delivery represents the opposition and resistance of the worldly minded. And near by stood a dragon ready to destroy the Child of Divine Truth as soon as he was born, and by this beast is represented "those who are eager to extinguish the doctrine of the New Church at its birth." Hindmarsh might have reminded himself of the murderous attempt of Herod to destroy the Infant Jesus in His First Advent. And so it was that Robert Hindmarsh was set down, as he says, "a mere simpleton, an infatuated youth, and little better than a madman, led away by the reveries of an old enthusiast and imposter," Emanuel Swedenborg.

That dragon is alive today. Humanism, naturalism, and agnosticism unite in belittling the doctrines of the New Church, see no value in preaching by the correspondences, eschew the spiritual sense of the Word, and would like to see a Church not yet quite dead buried in oblivion.

The solemn responsibility rests upon us New-Churchmen, who love our doctrines and are enamored of her spiritual interpretation of the Word and nature, and who believe that she will yet illumine the world and become the crown of all

the churches, to rescue this child of doctrine from the dragon of naturalism waiting to devour it,—to prevent the premature burial of the young man not yet dead, and reanimate the cold statue of our former faith to life, warmth, and vitality.

For some years now the New Church has been decreasing in numbers and churches. It behooves all of us to realize the richness of our heritage which the world so sadly needs, and to consider carefully as legatees of this heritage the responsibilities attached thereto.

Therefore one of our greatest responsibilities is to associate more often and more closely with devout New-Church people, who love the Writings and therefore think and act after an angelic manner. Such people will raise the standard of our thinking and help us to be more aware of spiritual forces and the power that resides in the Word.

This higher thinking will also be fostered by attending New-Church services, where the heavenly doctrines are preached and explained by ministers well-versed in correspondences, who love the spiritual sense of the Scriptures, and are in a state of illustration or illumination. Unless a minister is in this inward illumination, he is liable to give his people the stone of materialism when they are asking for the Bread of Life, or the serpent of falsity when they desire the fish of some natural truth.

We have a special responsibility and privilege also in partaking of the Lord's Supper, not only according to the usual manner in remembrance of Him, but according to the correspondences, whereby we raise ourselves into that upper room of the interiors of our mind, and appropriate the bread of His Divine Good which nourishes our hearts, and the wine of His Divine Truth which enlightens our understanding.

Then again it should be our responsibility and privilege to attend Sunday school, especially if the pastor or one well versed in New-Church doctrines has an adult class where

we may study directly the Word Itself, in company with other kindred minds.

But best of all it should be our delight to study the Word and the Writings daily in private, that we may gain the ascendancy over this material world, and come into contact for a few minutes each day with positive spiritual forces, and gain fellowship with intelligent spirits who will keep us in all our ways and bear us up in their hands lest we dash our foot against a stone.

And as we study the biography of Washington and Lincoln to stimulate the spark of patriotism in our youth, and inculcate in them the principles of American democracy, so let us place before them the life of Emanuel Swedenborg as an example of obedience, industry, sobriety, public service, steadfastness to ideals, consecration of heart, and surrender to God's will and purposes. The height of his intellect can only be appreciated as we endeavor to scale some of the mountain peaks in his "Divine Love and Wisdom" and "The Divine Providence," while the profundity of his mind can only be ascertained as we try to grasp the deeper levels of thought in the "Arcana Cœlestia."

In this manner, we who are fathers will create an aura of spiritual influence which will affect our families, and we who are ministers will create a spiritual atmosphere which will be felt by our congregations, and raise them above the thought of the world to a divine way of thinking. And the business man will influence by his spiritual thought hundreds of people; but to do this he must be a constant reader of the Word and lover of the heavenly doctrines.

But why all of this incomparable heritage and manifold responsibilities attached thereto? Why should we ascend into heaven? That we may bask there in an eternal sunshine? God forbid. We ascend to the heavenly Jerusalem where we are endued with power from on High, only that this power may descend into our natural minds, and complete the process of purification, casting out unbelief, materialism, naturalism, and every thought opposed to God, and

descending into our external man and corporeal frame, subdue every natural impulse, overcome every wild passion, and exterminate every foul persuasion. And when wild nature is subdued and we are sitting clothed in the garment of truth in our right mind (which is the spiritual) at the feet of Christ, we are then competent to solve the problems of society. Use is the only excuse for anything in heaven or on earth; and Swedenborg says that there are three things that can not be separated,—love, wisdom, and the uses of life; and that if one of them is separated the other two go (Apocalypse Revealed, n. 352). Swedenborg may have had his head in the heavens, but his feet walked firmly the earth; and everywhere in his Writings and in his life we see the perfect balance of the man.

Therefore let the New Church uncap the light that she possesses upon a darkened world; and wherever the mighty shaft of that search-light turns we shall see sin, ignorance, materialism and naturalism fleeing before it, and we shall thank God not only for the Law and the Prophets and the Gospels, but also for the exposition of the spiritual sense of the whole Word; and we shall have a greater appreciation of that humble servant of whom Markham said:

> Back in the abyss of theologic night
> He was the one man who beheld the Light;
> His were the eyes on the front of that dark age
> Which read the Truth upon the judgment page.
> And thus this guest of the angelic spheres
> Let out a gleam of Heaven upon the years!

JEDEDIAH EDGERTON.

THE LETTERS OF WILLIAM HILL (VI)

EDITED BY REV. FREDERIC R. CROWNFIELD

THE letters of this instalment of all the known letters of William Hill, publication of which began in our issue for July, 1931, were all to William Jenks of Cambridge, Mass. They are here published for the first time. One other letter to Mr. Jenks, dated May 11, 1800, first appeared in our issue of last April.

XXXII

Milton[1] Aug. 6, 1801

My dear friend!

On several accounts I am obliged again to defer our Removal to Cambridge 'till the Middle of next Week — You will oblige me therefore by informing your good Mother, & if any inconvenience should have been incurred by the delay, it shall be compensated —

I am afraid you are too much engaged to make us a visit at this beautiful place before our departure or it would have given us great satisfaction —

Mrs. Hill unites in Respects to Mrs. Jenks, with

Your affect. &c.

Willm. Hill

XXXIII

Little Cambridge Octob. 20. 1802.

My dear friend!

The change in the Weather has prevented our seeing you again before our departure for Wrentham,[2] from whence we expect a Carriage to be sent for us tomorrow — With this

[1] Milton, Mass., about ten miles southeast of Boston, now in Norfolk County.

[2] Wrentham, a town in Norfolk County, Massachusetts, about twenty-five miles southwest of Boston.

you will Receive your Cane, which I think it best to leave with Mr. Roby, also a Letter from Mr. Craig, which I will thank you to deliver to him with the Manuscript. I wish to say many things to you, but have not time; will write to you as soon as my Winter quarters are Established, where I shall hope to be indulged with your Correspondence.

Mrs. H. unites in affectionate Regards to your family & fervent wishes for your happiness, with

Your sincere friend &c

Willm. Hill

XXXIV

New York April 10. 1802

My dear Friend!

Expecting a private opportunity to Boston by a Son of Dr. Whipple, I am desirous to embrace it, to express my Wish of hearing from you, when you can find leisure & inclination to oblige me with a Letter — My dear Partner is often asking me why I never hear from my friend Mr. Jenks, & I am at a loss whether to attribute it most to my own fault or your forgetfulness of me. However it be, I am not willing to remain any longer without some Communication, especially as it seems doubtful whether I shall have the pleasure of seeing you again, so soon as I expected —

You will perhaps be surprised to hear that I have made a purchase of a small Estate in the Neighbourhood of Philadelphia,[1] to which I intend soon to retire for my benefit of my health et caeteris paribus. I should have gone upon it this Spring, but was afraid it would be too far from the City to be safe at present for Mrs. Hill, I was anxious also to fulfil my obligations to the people at Augusta by making a Journey that way during the Summer. For this purpose I wrote to Mr. Vaughan at Hallowell to Enquire for me if they had settled a Minister, or if my Services for a few months would still be acceptable, but as I have received no answer I begin to think it most prudent to save myself so

[1] At Haverford.

much trouble & Expence, as well as the struggle of parting with so many dear friends on my return, & turning my back upon my favourite residence — My prospects appear very pleasing to the Eye of the World, & our friends have abounded in Congratulations, but I cannot say they are such as compleatly accord with my own vices and feelings — However, the little taper whose rays are lost in the streets of a City, might give a chearful light from a cottage window —

I will not deny myself the pleasure of informing you, that I have lately been peculiarly gratified in preaching to the prisoners, in the State prison, or penitentiary house in the Neighbourhood of this City — I went at particular request, attended by several carriages of my friends, & the Meeting was truly solemn & affecting. There are above 800 prisoners who are kept in very good order, I addressed them from Job. XXII. 21, and enjoyed more liberty & satisfaction than I have ever experienced out of the pale of the New Church — Many of these poor Creatures, I thought, might be much nearer the Kingdom of Heaven, than the Scribes & Pharisees who think they are Rich & have need of Nothing, whilst in reality they are poor & miserable & blind & naked. Their attention to the whole Service was very devout, many of them appeared to be sincerely penitent, they sung admirably, & it was felt at the heart — I am going to address them again tomorrow from Romans V. 8.

I have not been invited to preach any where else in this City but at the Church of the Universalists, which I declined, but think I shall begin next Sunday, & give them a few discourses before I leave the City — The Bishop & some of the other Clergy have done me the honour to call upon me, & I have returned their Visits, the former has a volume of Swedenborgianism to read, but, though a good man, I have not much hopes of his making any thing of it; they pride themselves greatly in their Orthodoxy, and are vastly more Zealous about the Ceremonials of Religion, than

in any other part of the Union; if the Church of England had been Swedenborgian they would have received the Doctrines with avidity.

We have lately much gratified in reading a portion of *Horne on the Psalms* for our family repast after breakfast, if you have not this Work, I could advise you to lose no time in procuring it, he comes nearer the Doctrines of the New Church in his spiritual Explanations of the Word, than any other Writer, & appears to have been a Zealous Student in the School of Mystical Divinity — Our Evenings Recreation at this time is from the Works of *Sir Willm. Jones,* a portrait of this admirable man, which I lately saw in a vol. of the European Magazines, has so much of your character, that I do not know when I have been so much tempted to break the 8th[1] Commandment —

My paper reminds me to conclude, with united regards to Mrs. Jenks, & our other friends at Cambge. Remember us also to your good Mother. Write to me soon to the care of Mrs. Sarah Startin, & believe me —

Ever affectionately your's

Willm. Hill.

I have written you a careless letter that you may not stand upon punctilio.

XXXV

New York June 8th. 1802 —

My dear friend!

Although I expect to have the pleasure of calling upon you at Cambridge, perhaps before the month has elapsed, I cannot refrain from acknowledging the pleasure I received from your favour of the 7th ult: and which I should have done before but for my absence from New York on a

[1] Apparently Hill uses the numbering of the Commandments common in most Protestant Churches. In this numbering the eighth commandment is "Thou shalt not steal." The meaning would then be that he was tempted to steal the volume, or at least to remove the portrait.

visit abt. 80 miles up the North River,[1] where there was no favourable opportunity of transmitting a letter to you — I cannot describe to you the satisfaction which your letter imparted, and with which I congratulate you on the change of situation upon which you have ventured, not doubting but it has been by direction of Infinite Wisdom to bring you forward in the Way of a more Extensive Usefulness. I could not have imagined any thing more desirable for you, nor more congenial with the views I have been used to cherish as to the Good to be derived to Society from an enlarged exercise of your talents, and I cannot but rejoice that this appears to be ordered by a Kind Providence in a way so congenial with your own inclinations. The reflection of this will also be my greatest consolation in retirement, and indeed, to tell you the truth, it has appeared to be the most necessary of all others to reconcile me to my lot, which, notwithstanding the agreeable colouring you have been pleased to bestow upon it, is embraced, tho' not unthankfully, yet more from necessity than choice —

I am afraid of being shut out from all spiritual usefulness, unless my faculties should be sufficiently restored, and a door be opened for a winter campaign at Philadelphia or Washington, and it has been partly with a view to some expectations of this kind from the latter place, that I have made such arrangements for taking possession of my Farm, that it need not take place till the ensuing Spring, although I shall wish to establish my Household before Winter. In the mean while I have also a prospect of the pleasure of seeing my good friends in New England once more, which is also highly gratifying to my affectionate partner.

It seems to me that you acted very wisely in not accepting at present the invitations from Marblehead and Providence, for I do not see how you could well take orders in the Episcopal Church according to the Canons they have lately adopted; and your present situation appears too eligible to be left for an uncertainty. By instructing those who are to

[1] I.e., the Hudson.

instruct others, and embracing the Opportunity thereby afforded you of imbuing their Minds with genuine principles of religion and virtue, you may be more extensively useful in promoting the Cause of Truth and Goodness, which is the Glory of God and happiness of man, than in any other situation whatever. For your present Comfort also, you ought not to doubt, but that if you are faithful to the Talent committed to you, dispensing the Truth with the cautious Zeal which it recommends, and as your Congregation appears able to bear, you will be made the happy Instrument of raising up again, at ye seat of literature and science, that Holy Tabernacle of which it is written, "Behold the Tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God himself shall be with them, their God" — Rev. XXI.

You have helped me to a very accurate idea of the estimation of Bishop Horne's Work on the Psalms, "it is as spiritual as could be expected without a knowledge of the *real internal sense*"; it is evident however, and in some of his sermons I think there is the most positive proof, that, altho' he may not fully have admitted that sense, he sometime drank pretty freely at the New Jerusalem fountain, & was only withheld from larger libations by a partiality for the system of Orthodoxy, which he conceived himself bound to maintain — The same may be said of the Revd. W. Jones, some of whose Works no doubt you have seen — Such Writings may be useful to introd[uce] spiritual ideas with those who can only see thro' a certain medium, [but] after the New Revelation, they are comparatively poor — Since I finished reading Sir Wm. Jones, I have gone thro' the English Translation of the Work *De cultu & Amore Dei*, & ye same idea recurs — It is pleasant indeed to observe the scattered rays of Truth which that admirable author has collected with so much labour from the literature of ye East, but to see them as flowing from their Divine Source, in perfect union, & harmonious agreement, we must revert to the matchless volumes in which they appear in all their lustre

as rays of heavenly light, & glowing with the flame of Celestial love & goodness — See N 49 & 67 of the admirable Work above mentioned, & say if any thing so magnificent is to be found in any modern or fashionable Author —

Before I conclude I wish to mention that I took the liberty sometime since to recommend to your acquaintance, a Mr. Whitney who teaches a school at Marblehead, & from whom I received a very agreeable & sensible letter, requesting my opinion of the propriety of his officiating in ye Episcopal Church there. You will find him a person of great sincerity, & well affected toward ye Doctrines of the New Church, & if you are not dazzled with any apparent brilliancy of intellect, you will find him possessed of the wisdom of teachableness so highly extolled by Him who knew all things, at least you will be charmed with his modest & unassuming demeanour — If he calls upon you it will be to profit by your conversation & advice —

I have now only to request our united regards to Mrs. Jenks, & to our friends in Cambridge, & with every good wish for your prosperity & happiness, remain

Your affectionate friend &c Willm Hill

XXXVI

Wrentham January 6. 1803 —

My dear friend!

The important & happy Event which your kind letter, just received, announces, & the rare Sincerity of genuine affection which it breathes, whilst they call forth the tears of gratitude & Joy, impel me at the same time to immediate congratulations, & assurances of the interest I feel in all your happiness. — Most fervently do I join with you, in adoring the FATHER of MERCIES for this new Gift of his Goodness towards you, I feel happy in persuading myself that it may be in the Womb of His Providence to continue the precious deposit in your care, & most sincerely do I pray, that you may therein experience as much greater satisfaction than my own, altho' this appears superabundant, as is

your capacity of enjoying & improving it to the best advantage. I beg you also to offer my congratulations, I should say, our united congratulations to your amiable partner, Mrs. H. having requested me to express the interest she feels in the Event, & to add her best wishes to my own for Mrs. Jenks's recovery, & perfect Enjoyment of every maternal endearment, satisfaction & delight.

Accept, my dear Sir, my sincere thanks for your kind enquiries after "my own little darling", & for the lively interest which you express in his welfare, & which, I assure you, had been already marked & contemplated by us, as a most acceptable confirmation of your friendly attachment. He is greatly improved since you saw him, & grows really beautiful & interesting, his eyes sparkle abundantly with the promises of intelligence, & altho' he is already under the process of teething, the celestial sweetness of his temper is a constant theme of admiration. If he should be destined to pass through the ordeal of worldly trial & affliction, & by uses on earth to be prepared for uses in Heaven, I trust in the DIVINE MERCY that he will be found not to disappoint the hopes, which the partiality of friendship has led you to form of him; the Name of his father's Friend I intend, for several reasons, shall be early endeared to him, & both our sons being, thro' the Divine Blessing, born & educated under the influences of the true Conjugal Life & to the Friendship of Good, we may Rationally presume that in that sphere in which human minds dwell, they will become early & intimately acquainted; all true relationship is according to spiritual affinity, & who knows but they may come hereafter to recognize in each other personally the marks of this divine relationship, & by a reciprocity of attachment, & mutual communication of talents & acquirements, to strengthen & Encrease each others virtue & usefulness — Perhaps they may fulfil, in our stead, the wishes of a good Friend, which I once communicated to you. Thus you see my good friend, how far I reciprocate your pleasing anticipations, nor do I think it vain or wrong to indulge in such anticipations, if,

after all, we promise ourselves nothing from merit, but rather doubt of all from demerit, & in true humility of heart resign ourselves to the Divine Will & Providence.

I had not intended to visit Cambridge again before my departure for the Southward, which must take place very soon; but now, if I should come so near as Boston, I must take a peep at your precious charge, not only for present gratification, but that I may carry some of the little features with me, as a ground of reminiscence, & additional means of recalling some of those sentiments & feelings which will be most consoling in my state of banishment — If I should have the pleasure of seeing you again, I intend bringing with me the transcript you requested from a letter of a friend on the nature of property, & shall hope to Receive something you promised me in Return. In ye mean while, present our united regards to Mrs. Jenks, & our other friends, & believe me, with every good wish for your Welfare — Your truly affectionate friend

Willm. Hill

XXXVII

Haverford June 29, 1803—

My very dear Friend!

No Doubt but you as well as some other of my Friends at Cambridge have begun to charge me (if I am worth so much consideration) with forgetfulness if not with ingratitude, and the mischief is, that the possibility of such charges never occurred to me, till I am afraid it is almost too late to exculpate myself from them. I can, however, assure my good friends, that so far from having been unmindful of them, or of my promises to them, they have never been long absent from my thoughts, the very circumstances and causes of my silence having continually sent me back to my fav'rite residence with a regretful spirit, wishing itself once again seated among them, in a little cottage, enjoying the tranquility of peace, the delight of at least the hope of usefulness, and the true comforts of society.

The truth, my friend, is, that not having been able to send you any good account of us, I have felt unwilling to trouble you with any other, and this has been the principal cause of my silence. Ever since we left New England we have met with little else but disappointment and trouble, the more mortifying and vexatious, because where they could have been least suspected; and some time since, to compleat our perplexities, the Overseer of the farm, with his wife who managed the Dairy & her assistant left us at a moments notice, with the whole burden of the business on our hands, for which we were totally unprepared and unprovided. As we have not been able to supply their places, or obtain assistance at all adequate to our wants, this circumstance has involved us in much perplexity and trouble; and as I see no prospect of any termination thereto for the present year, I have at last determined to wait no longer for better tales and better times, but resume the pen of friendly correspondence, although I seem to have almost forgotten how to use it. —

Yet let me not leave you with too unfavourable impressions, as to our present situation; our farm, which we had only seen in the winter, is much more pleasant and agreeable than we had anticipated, and as to external appearance wins daily upon our affections; it is such a place as we could not think of quitting without regret, if we had liberty to enjoy it, and this may be ye case hereafter, if not now; for the present year we must be content to endure toil and trouble with the prospect of no better issue than that of a certain and considerable loss; but if we continue patient and resigned, other and better purposes of the Divine Providence than we are aware of might thereby be answered, and in another Year, our troubles may be changed for quiet, our disappointments for successes, and our losses for gain. In the mean while we learn still better from ye present lesson, how to be prepared for whatever may be ordained.

I would add, that I get along at present with more ease than I expected; our Hay harvest which was considerable is now just finished without any noise or confusion, the people

I employ are all sober civil and obliging, and if I should get thro' the Grain harvest with as little difficulty and embarrassment, I shall have great Cause to be thankful. We are deprived almost entirely of our fruit, on which we chiefly depended, but as the care and management of this would have been the most difficult, expensive and irksome, and our Corn-planting has been very considerable this year, the loss is the less to be regretted. We feel it most on account of our friends, whom we had flattered ourselves with the expectation of treating luxuriantly, with the choicest fruits in Pennsylvania.

I am sorry to find by a letter lately received from Mr. Henry (?), who has had the pleasure of a visit from Mr. Craig, that the devastations of the Snow Storm in May were not confined to this part of the Continent, but were also severely felt in your Neighbourhood. Here, the scene was truly pitiable; it was on a Sabbath morning (in which I have lately learnt the full enjoyment of a day's Exemption from worldly Care and toil) rising early to enjoy in perfect quiet the tranquil scenes around me, behold! instead of the fragrant blossom and luxuriant foliage, the whole face of Nature appeared covered with the severest garb of Winter, the herbage laid all prostrate and the trees bending almost to ye Earth under their chilling burden, the latter also awfully crackling about one's ears first on this side then on that, some parting with their beautiful tops, and others with their finest branches — Such was the scene which arrested my attention on my entering the piazza, and which kept me as it were rivetted to the spot in awful contemplation; I soon lost all consideration of its immediate cause and consequences, whilst it seemed to present a too faithful picture of the sad condition of my own mind, and that of the world at large, continually laid waste and its fairest promises destroyed by ye conflicts of its natural elements separated from the spiritual, which, if properly united and harmonized, would, by a due transmission of celestial influence, soon compose and harmonize all the strife of nature. — But alas! how different

is the case at present! instead of a full and free recepti[on] and transmission, what thwarting, opposing, obstructing, yea rejecting of the sacred influences of that Celestial Sun whose Heat in its essence is Love and whose Light in its Essence is Wisdom! even in the best disposed what indifference and unfaithfulness to their benign designs and operations! Is it not most wonderful, my friend, that so much Goodness Order and Beauty do still appear around us, how omnipotent must be that Wisdom which over rules so much perversity, how extensive that Mercy which still bestows so much, where there is so much transgression!!!

For myself, I desire to bow my head in the Dust, in adoration of the Infinite Mercy of the ALMIGHTY, especially in those of its dispensations, which tend to lay me low under a sense of my great want of it, and of the extreme depth of my Misery without it.

From a gloomy, but I believe to you, not unwelcome subject, my dear Wife has just called me to look at her little darling as he lays asleep in a large basket; and surely, without vanity I may say, that a Raphael or a Guido would have thought themselves well rewarded to have travelled far for such a model; I wish you could see your little favorite, now become a fat, rosy-cheeks, curly pated boy, his animation encreasing with his natural vigour, and of a character equal to all that you could suppose or wish. He seems to be mercifully lent to us at this time for our delight, comfort and support; — for in him we can always see the Blessing of Heaven, which dissipates our gloom, consoles us in our crosses, and supports us thro' all our difficulties. Shall not the pleasure be added to us of hearing soon of your little cherub, and our adopted relation, I trust that it will, and entreat that both in the time and measure of your correspondence you will treat me according to Gospel Wisdom, much better than I have you, for tho' I am lazy to communicate I am always eager to hear. —

Please to present our love and respects to our good friends Mr. and Mrs. Craig, and inform them that the

cuttings were received safe and in time for use; Mrs. H. promised to write to Mrs. Craig whose labours with dear little Debby's were evident on ye occasion, but our hurry of business just then came upon us, and it has been neglected by us both. Do us the kindness also to remember us affectionately to all other our good friends (*sic*) at Cambridge, whose names my paper will not permit me to particularize. To dear Mrs. B. in particular Mrs. H. requests words of kindness, as also to your dear partner, in which also I beg to be united, and remain, My dear friend, with unalterable Esteem,

Ever and affectionately Your's

Willm. Hill.

Direct to me at Haverford
to the Care of Mr. Fred; Eckstein
N 211 Market Street Philadelphia —

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT

CONSTRUCTIVE FACTORS IN THE CONVENTION AND THE FRYEBURG ASSEMBLY

The Convention and the Fryeburg Assembly are institutions which share in the purpose and effort to promote the welfare of the Church, and it is interesting to consider the present status of each.

They are both missionary bodies in the sense of being designed to formulate and convey the message of the Church to those who in various degrees are unacquainted with it. It is true that the Convention is national in its scope, while the Assembly is more local, though it embraces several States. The Convention is an extraordinary achievement in institutional construction; the Assembly is a comparatively simple organization. Both are educational in design and effort, for though the Convention is primarily an administrative body of representatives, its annual meetings are devoted to addresses and discussions which to a greater or less degree enlighten the members as to the truth and importance of the doctrines of the Church and also deepen their conviction. The Assembly on the other hand is deliberately educational, and incidentally social and recreative. The program of lectures aims to develop one chosen theme of fundamental importance to the thought and life of the Church. The setting is most charming. The attractive looking building stands in the space between two groves, with the public highway at the front, and the Saco River at the back, flowing past at the foot of the high steep bank a few feet away with vistas up and down its length. Just across the river the extensive and beautiful meadows with the blue mountains beyond form a picture of constant delight. Within, the ample dining-room, with three rows of tables where all the attendants are seated at meals, furnishes a happy social occasion three times a day. In this room the lectures are held, also dancing, games, and other forms of social entertainment. The

large back porch affords plenty of room for chairs, where the friends sit, talk and enjoy the scenery.

The Convention met this year as an experiment at Chautauqua; this gave an air of novelty and interest. Chautauqua is admirably fitted for Conventions; in fact it was designed and built for this purpose. The hotels give ample and comfortable accommodations. Assembly rooms are fully adequate, and the town itself is distinguished for its attractions. The lake gives a beautiful water view, and along the lake shore delightful walks are provided. The authorities were generous in their hospitality, and made every effort to please and to accommodate. One of the well equipped churches was placed at the disposal of the Convention and its auxiliary bodies. Most of the attendants had their meals in one dining hall, and this gave a festive appearance and a social opportunity which was very much enjoyed. All the arrangements conspired to make the Convention contented and happy. As usual at the Sunday morning services there was the atmosphere of solemnity and an impressive elevation of feeling. Those who take the *Messenger* have seen the account of the proceedings, so there is no special reason for dwelling on the details here. It may be said that the addresses and discussions were interesting on the ordinary level, such as might be heard at any religious meeting. There was of course the usual reference to Swedenborg and the New Church, but the regular minister also referred to Swedenborg favorably in his prayer and in his discourse. In the opinion of some there was little interest in the spiritual meaning of the Lord's Word, and little effort to rise to the level of spiritual thought. It seems that in this respect the Convention was a fair sample of the condition of the Church at large.

The history of the Convention is to a considerable extent the history of the Church. The various forces which have operated during the growth of the Church have inevitably operated in the Convention, for the reason that the Convention is made up of representatives from the several Associations. These same forces operate, on a smaller scale, of course, in the Fryeburg Assembly, which is made up of individuals from various localities. In the case of the Assembly, however, these forces

are more easily observed and directed. The administration of the Assembly is more direct and concentrated, and is zealous and steady in its endeavor to keep true to New-Church principles.

An interesting picture of the life of the Church and of the Convention is that drawn in Mrs. Marguerite Block's recent book, "The New Church in the New World." There we see some of the forces at work which are operating in the Convention now, and have been operating from the first. In the recent Convention it may be that some of the issues were sharpened, but it cannot be said that they were settled, and they cannot be settled until they are clearly seen and sharply defined in the light of the fundamental principles out of which they grow. In view of this situation, it may be opportune to consider some of the fundamental principles involved and some of the views that have been held throughout the history of the Church.

We hear much talk about the New Church, about the New-Church doctrines, and about New-Church light; but when we ask and seek to ascertain definitely what is meant by the New Church, what the New-Church doctrines are and what they teach, when we ask for examples of New-Church light, we get no definite answers from those who do this talking. They seem to be satisfied to know that there are such things, that the New Church actually exists, and that its importance is immeasurable, that the New-Church doctrines are there to be learned and proclaimed, and that these doctrines throw new light upon life. But there is little evidence that those who know these things are interested to go further and determine more definitely what these things mean. If we observed that all this was exemplified in the addresses at the Convention, is it any wonder that we heard notes of dissatisfaction and despondency? One source of dissatisfaction and despondency frequently referred to was the fact that the membership of the Church seems to be declining. Some take comfort in the fact that the membership in other Churches is declining, and attribute it to the character of the age; but this is not satisfactory to those who believe that the New Church is a new religious dispensation, a new Chris-

tianity, Christianity on a higher level, the spiritual level. It is true that we live in an age which is largely, if not predominantly, non-Christian and irreligious. Whether it is more non-Christian and irreligious than previous ages, is a question about which well informed people differ. There is, however, a consensus of opinion among close observers and careful students that this age is almost hopelessly non-Christian and irreligious; and of course this must be taken into account. There are many other opinions as to the cause of this decline, and no doubt there are many causes. Worldliness, self-seeking, dissension, and division have all played a disastrous part. But whatever may be said of these various causes, the *failure* to apprehend and convey the message of the Church has been one constant and sufficient cause of the lack of growth and influence. This is a most serious matter. Where is the evidence? The evidence seems clear. Our books have been unequal to the task which they undertook; our periodicals, addresses, and sermons have fallen short of what should be rightfully expected of them; they have not conceived and delivered their proper message. As a consequence, the great body of Church members have been without proper leadership, and various ill-considered ideas and programs have been proposed and urged which have distracted and diverted attention and effort from constructive and progressive achievement. It would be out of place to mention or dwell upon these just now, but some of them have been persistently and constantly disturbing.

From the very beginning, there have been two views as to the nature of the Church and as to the method of promoting its growth. In England the early members came out of the denominations then in the field, for the most part Episcopalians and Methodists. It was inevitable that the Episcopalians should have been disinclined to sever relations with the mother Church. In the case of the Methodists there was more readiness to break off and form a new and distinctive Church body. As a matter of fact and of history, there was a clash between these two classes of believers. One group was opposed to forming a new church body; they maintained that the doctrines would permeate the other bodies until finally they would

all be made new. As a matter of fact none of these Church bodies have been made new, though many of them have cast aside some of the traditional dogmas which seemed irrational and inconsistent with modern knowledge and modern thought. The other group insisted that the doctrines must have a proper embodiment in a separate and distinctive Church organization, on the principle that new wine must be put into new bottles. There is some evidence that the New-Church doctrines have permeated the various religious bodies to some extent, if not considerably. In view of this fact, New-Church people have been quite disposed to class all persons known to be interested readers of the doctrines as New-Churchmen. It appears, however, on investigation that in most such cases the interest is only partial and confined to some particular statements of the doctrines. In general, respect for Swedenborg as a man of science and as an extraordinarily gifted religious teacher has increased, but his distinctive fundamental doctrines seem to have made little impression. In particular, his doctrine that the Lord Jesus Christ glorified is the one only God of heaven and earth, and his doctrine that the Bible as to the five books of Moses, the Prophets and Psalms, the Gospels and the Book of Revelation, with the historical books I and II Kings, have a distinct and continuous spiritual meaning — these doctrines which are fundamental and essential have been treated with little respect.

The truth is—and it is of vital importance to recognize it—that it is no easy matter to become a New-Churchman in the full sense of the term, that is, a New-Churchman who is well acquainted with the doctrines of the Church and educated in the thought of the Church. No doubt there are various stages of New-Churchmanship, and people join the Church with various ideas and from various motives which they themselves do not analyze nor appreciate. Some may join the Church for social reasons, some as a matter of course in the family life, some because of certain ideas which attract them, some because they are offended by the traditional dogmas. These are all proper and acceptable members of the Church in their way and in their special degree. The same is true of all Churches and

Church membership, and in all organizations of men; some are novitiates and some are more fully initiated. The term New-Churchman, therefore, should be applied with due discrimination, especially in cases where members of other religious bodies have shown an interest in particular New-Church doctrines, but withhold belief in the Church as founded upon a new body of revealed truth and especially upon the doctrine of the Second Coming. Those who think that the New-Church doctrines will permeate other religious bodies to the extent of making them over into full-fledged members do not seem to appreciate the difficulty of throwing off early impressions, associations, ideas, habits of thought, and interests, and changing to full and well grounded New-Churchmanship, with its background and atmosphere. At any rate, history shows that, with the possible exception of the Methodists, this kind of permeation has not taken place to any perceptible degree, and that the New Church has not made any progress in this way.

On the other hand, the view that the doctrines must have the proper embodiment in a separate and distinctive Church body has been well established, and the Church has, with some vicissitudes, gradually extended and strengthened. Nevertheless these two conflicting views have persisted, and the conflict has contributed much to the disturbance of the peace and progress of the Church. More recently the idea that there should be no separate New-Church organization has combined with the "Modernistic" argument that an ecclesiastism is an anachronism at this day of advanced enlightenment, and that the Church is a needless and a mischievous organization. This argument is supported by the "higher critical" appeal to Gospel history. It is baldly asserted that the Lord did not found a Church, and never contemplated one. The Lord's own declaration "Upon this rock will I build my Church" is discredited and deleted on the ground that it is a later addition by an unauthorized scribe. So too it is said and argued that Swedenborg did not found a sect, and consequently that the building of a new Church organization was not his intention and not in accordance with his spirit; and this in spite of Swedenborg's plain language and especially his oft repeated and emphasized

principle, "All power lies in ultimates." Accordingly spiritual and religious power must operate in an organized body of adherents whose belief, thought, and conduct are directed by the doctrines of the religion which they accept.

Such arguments are spun from the naturalistic rationalism of the day, and rest finally on the presupposition that nature is all there is, and that religion is a fiction of the primitive untrained imagination. The naturalistic and rationalistic philosophies of the day have become so popularized that they form the tissue of everyday thought and speech, and have thus become incorporated in the body of our common sense. We all live, breathe, think, feel, and act in this atmosphere. The atmosphere of the New Church itself is seriously and constantly disturbed by these influences, and the activities of the Church are diverted from normal and constructive effort; this applies also to the Convention.

The recent overturn of the administrative offices and agencies of Convention was a shock and surprise to some for the reason that they did not seem to be aware of these conditions. But it is important to appreciate the underlying currents, however unobserved and obscure, that found outlet in the Convention's action. It may be said, without passing judgment on individuals or parties, that the sentiment of loyalty was strongly aroused by views and tendencies which have agitated the Church more profoundly of late; and yet these views and tendencies have not been clearly defined, and that is one reason why the action of Convention was a puzzling surprise. It may, then, be well to discuss in a general and abstract way some of the principles upon which harmony and active co-operation must be secured.

First of all as the foundation of united effort and progress there must be agreement in belief and conviction that the Lord has made His Second Coming in the Spiritual Sense of His Word. It is the common profession of this belief that constitutes membership in the New Church, and it is dissent from this belief, or question as to its meaning, that has disturbed the harmony of the Church, or may have taken people out of the Church. With respect to the meaning and nature of

the Second Coming, two opposing views may be held, and have been held. One is the strict and definite view that the Lord has made His Second Coming specifically in the spiritual sense of His Word, and that this spiritual sense was opened first of all to Emanuel Swedenborg. This gives Swedenborg his proper position in relation to the New Church. It is his unfolding of the spiritual sense in his writings, in particular in the "Arcana Cœlestia" and in the two books on the Apocalypse that has made known the spiritual sense to men. His writings, therefore, serve as means of leading men to a knowledge of the spiritual sense and of its Source. This gives the place and function of his writings. In other words, these are the special means the Lord has provided for men to come to Him in the newly revealed spiritual truth of His Word.

There is, however, another view of the Second Coming and of the means of our approach. The Second Coming is by some thought of as a universal movement of the Lord's Spirit into the minds and lives of all men, a universal atmosphere pressing into men like the air we breathe. This is a primitive type of thinking, and goes back to the time when spirit was thought of as breath; it is also a type of materialistic and naturalistic universalism combined with a sentimentalizing rationalism. There is an enticing appearance of broad-mindedness and liberality in this view which is thought to contrast with the narrowness of the view that the Second Coming is definitely and specifically in the spiritual sense of the Word, and that we must acquire a knowledge of this spiritual sense to come into the Lord's spiritual presence, which is the Second Coming. When, however, we examine this view closely, the liberality is seen to be merely specious; vague and expansive imagining is substituted for clear and definite thinking as to the nature of spirit and the Divine. So God is thought of as a kind of universal Being, or Influence, to which materializing reflection and analysis lead; He is no longer a person, and is not limited in His mode of expression, or revelation, to the absurd use of a book. The word "God" becomes another name for Nature. Thus we are brought into the extremes of modernistic naturalism, where religion, revelation, and the Bible are virtually,

or deliberately, repudiated, as incongruous in the field of rational discourse.

If, on the other hand, we think of *spirit as love,* according to Swedenborg's formula "substance is love," we get rid of the materialism of this universalistic philosophy, and are able to think of ultimate reality as love, wisdom, and use. In this we leave second rate Neoplatonism, and rise to the level of true spiritual philosophy. It is of critical importance to bear in mind that there are various degrees of love. We commonly recognize that love may be more or less general. In going from less general to more general love we finally reach the idea of universal all-comprehensive love, and from this we may pass to the conception of Infinite Love, which is God the Lord. Love is a wise and active experience, and in the language of modern Idealism it is at the universal level a form of universal experience, which embraces all varieties of particular experiences; and among the relatively particular experiences are men and angels, and this again is according to Swedenborg that "men and angels are loves and wisdoms." But the loves and wisdoms which men and angels are, are organisms of states, states of feeling, states of affections and thought. These organisms communicate with each other by means of ideas, affections and thoughts, expressed in words and deeds. So the Lord as Love and Wisdom communicates with men in this world by means of particular states of love and wisdom expressed in the written Word. By means of the law of correspondence the letter of the Word is connected with particular states of the Lord's love and wisdom, His thoughts and affections for us. By this means a spiritual relation is established between us and the Lord, a relation between our spiritual affections and thoughts and His, and this constitutes His spiritual presence. The Lord as Creator and Preserver is present in all degrees of man's life, and in all states of his life whether on the natural or the spiritual level. But He is present on the spiritual level only when we co-operate with Him in raising our thoughts and affections to the spiritual level by making use of the means He has provided. We do not rise to this level by expansive sentiments aroused by contemplating the

immensities of the physical universe, or the glories of the sunset, or the beauties of the landscape, or the marvels of modern science. In all these there is no suggestion of the idea of God, as any materialistic or naturalistic philosopher will tell you, if he keeps strictly to his own proper universe of discourse. The idea of God is in these cases imported from without, and comes directly or indirectly from revelation.

So the idea of the Second Coming does not arise in reflection upon the wonders of the age. All these things are consistent with an age of religious and moral decay, not to say spiritual blindness. It is true that the idea with the expectation of the Second Coming was given us in the words of the Lord; but that expectation has met with too frequent disappointment to give much assurance for the present. The Second Coming as a fact was first announced by Emanuel Swedenborg in his exposition of the spiritual meaning of the Book of Revelation. All of Swedenborg's doctrinal writings and Scripture interpretation are the means the Lord has provided for us to come into the spiritual truth of His Word and into His spiritual presence, which is the Second Coming. The idea that the Lord is making His Second Coming universally and immediately to all good men is equivalent to a denial of any specific Second Coming. It implies that the Lord makes His Second Coming in our states of feeling, emotions, and sentiments without the definite spiritual knowledge and light of the Word. It is this idea of the Second Coming and the New Church, and the idea that the New-Church doctrines are permeating the religious bodies around us so that there is, or may be, more New-Church outside the organization than in it, and consequently that a man may be, or may become, a New-Churchman without any direct knowledge of Swedenborg or his teachings,—it is these ideas and views, hovering more or less in the background, that have distressed, divided, and stirred the Church, and which were the motive forces that brought about the change of administration at the recent Convention. The new administration is looked to for protection against such influences, and for a consistent, constructive, and progressive policy. LEWIS F. HITE.

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